

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-05 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00
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FM AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8063
INFO CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 JAKARTA 4698

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: MASS, MORG, PINS, ID
SUBJECT: DEFENSE MINISTER'S COMMENTS ON THE U.S., INTERNAL AFFAIRS,
AND FOREIGN POLICY

1. SUMMARY. NEW MINISTER OF DEFENSE GENERAL M. JUSUF, WHO HAS BEEN ONE OF THE MORE ELUSIVE MEMBERS OF THE SUHARTO CABINET, ASKED ME TO SEE HIM PRIVATELY AT HIS RESIDENCE ON APRIL 11 FOR AN INFORMAL "GET ACQUAINTED" SESSION. WE SPENT ABOUT 45 MINUTES DEVOTED PRIMARILY TO THE ROLE OF THE MILITARY IN PRESENT-DAY INDONESIA. JUSUF SAID HE WOULD LIKE TO HOLD OFF, UNTIL HE IS MORE FULLY BRIEFED, ON A DETAILED DISCUSSION WITH ME OF MILITARY ASSISTANCE MATTERS. FOLLOWING THESE MORE DETAILED DISCUSSIONS AND AFTER HE HAS HAD A CHANCE TO SETTLE INTO HIS NEW POSITION, HE WOULD LIKE TO VISIT WASHINGTON TO GET HIS OWN ASSESSMENT OF WHAT INDONESIA REALISTICALLY CAN AND CANNOT EXPECT. END SUMMARY.

2. JUSUF OPENED THE DISCUSSION BY SAYING HE HAD INVITED ME TO HIS RESIDENCE IN ORDER THAT WE MIGHT TALK INFORMALLY WITHOUT ALL OF THE TRAPPINGS ASSOCIATED WITH AN OFFICE CALL. ON THIS FIRST MEETING HE WANTED US TO BECOME BETTER ACQUAINTED, BUT HE WOULD NOT ASK ME TO DISCUSS OUR MILITARY ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS IN DETAIL. HE

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HISSELF, HAVING BEEN OUT OF THE MILITARY MAINSTREAM FOR SOME YEARS, WAS OUT OF TOUCH. HE NEEDED TO HAVE MORE DETAILED TALKS WITH HIS OWN STAFF. FOLLOWING THIS, HE WOULD LIKE TO TALK WITH ME ABOUT OUR MILITARY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM, AND HE WOULD THEN CONSIDER VISITING WASHINTON SOMETIME LATER TO GET A BETTER ASSESSMENT OF WHAT INDONESIA REALISTICALLY CAN EXPECT BY WAY OF ASSISTANCE. IN RESPONSE TO A COMMENT BY ME, HE SAID HE DID NOT HAVE IN MIND

CARRYING A "SHOPPING LIST" TO WASHINGTON, BUT WANTED PRIMARILY TO RENEW ACQUAINTANCES AND DETERMINE WHAT WE MIGHT ACTUALLY BE ABLE TO DO SO HE WOULD KNOW EXACTLY WHERE HE STOOD.

3. ASKED WHETHER HE HAD DECIDED AS YET ON ANY NEW POLICIES TO BE INTRODUCED AS MINISTER OF DEFENSE, JUSUF SAID HE WAS CONCENTRATING ON TWO PRIORITY AREAS. FIRST, WHILE HE BELIEVED THE MILITARY WOULD REMAIN AN IMPORTANT ELEMENT IN THE INDONESIAN POLITICAL SCENE FOR MANY YEARS, HE THOUGHT THE TIME HAD COME WHEN IT SHOULD PULL BACK A BIT. HE SAW NO REASON WHY THE MILITARY SHOULD BE DOING THINGS WHICH THE POLICE OR CIVILIANS COULD DO AS WELL OR PERHAPS BETTER. HE FELT INDONESIA SHOULD MOVE TOWARD A MORE OPEN POLITICAL SYSTEM BUT, REVIEWING INDONESIA'S TURBULENT HISTORY, STRESSED THAT THIS MUST OCCUR GRADUALLY AND MUST BE KEYED TO LOCAL CONDITIONS.

4. SECONDLY, JUSUF SAID THE MILITARY NEEDED TO BE BETTER LED AND BETTER MOTIVATED. HE FINDS THAT MORALE IN THE ARMED FORCES IS POOR, PARTICULARLY IN THE LOWER RANKS, AND THAT RELATIONS BETWEEN THE MILITARY AND THE GENERAL POPULACE ARE BAD. HE NOTED THAT THE LOWER RANKS TEND TO FOLLOW THE EXAMPLES OF THEIR LEADERS. IF THESE LEADERS ARE INEFFICIENT AND HEAVYHANDED WITH THE PUBLIC, THEN THE LOWER RANKS ARE ALSO. ALL ELEMENTS OF THE MILITARY NEED TO BE CONVINCED THAT THEY ARE "NOT ABOVE THE PEOPLE, BUT ARE A PART OF THE PEOPLE". TOP MILITARY LEADERS, HE STRESSED, MUST SET BETTER EXAMPLES. HE NOTED (AS WAS INDEED THE CASE) THAT
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AS ONE SMALL STEP IN THIS DIRECTION HE HAD ELIMINATED GUARDS ON THE GATES OF HIS RESIDENCE. HE ASKED RHETORICALLY WHY HE NEEDED GUARDS TO PROTECT HIM FROM HIS OWN PEOPLE. ONLY THE PRESIDENT AND VICE PRESIDENT REQUIRED THIS TYPE OF PROTECTION FROM FANATICS. FOR THE CABINET MINISTERS THIS WAS A MERE TRAPPING OF OFFICE WHICH ISOLATED THEM FROM THE PEOPLE.

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5. JUSUF SAID THAT POOR MORALE IN THE ARMED FORCES STEMMED ALSO FROM INADEQUATE HOUSING, POOR MEDICAL CARE AND INSUFFICIENT SCHOOLS TO HANDLE MILITARY CHILDREN. IN HIS INITIAL MEETINGS AT THE MINISTRY OF DEFENSE, BRIEFERS HAD CONCENTRATED ON THE STATUS OF MILITARY EQUIPMENT AND FACILITIES. ASKED BY HIM HOW MANY BARRACKS HAD LEAKY ROOFS AND HOW MANY MILITARY POSTS HAD INADEQUATE SCHOOLS, THEY DID NOT KNOW. AS MINISTER OF DEFENSE, HE SAID HE IS GOING TO DEVOTE MAJOR ATTENTION TO SUCH MATTERS. HE ADDED THAT THIS IS EXTREMELY IMPORTANT IN ORDER TO IMPROVE ATTITUDES AMONG THE YOUNGER GENERATION WHICH SHOULD, WITHIN THE NEXT FIVE YEARS, REPLACE THE "GENERATION OF 1945".

6. TURNING TO DOMESTIC POLITICAL AFFAIRS, JUSUF SAID HE THOUGHT THE SECURITY SITUATION WOULD BE GENERALLY QUIET NOW THAT THE MPR SESSION WAS OVER, ALTHOUGH SOME SPORADIC INCIDENTS WERE POSSIBLE. HE FELT THAT THE STUDENTS WERE "TIRED" OF DEMONSTRATIONS AND THAT THEY SHOULD BE PERMITTED TO RESUME NORAL CAMPUS ACTIVITIES. THE MUSLIM POLITICAL GROUPS REQUIRED CAREFUL WATCHING, BUT HE SAID THEY NEEDED TO BE HANDLED CAREFULLY IN ORDER NOT TO ALIENATE THEM.

7. ASKED ABOUT THE POLITICAL DETAINEES RESULTING FROM THE ABORTIVE 1965 COMMUNIST COUP ATTEMPT, JUSUF SAID HE WAS IN FAVOR OF SPEEDING UP THEIR RELEASE. HE WAS PARTICULARLY ANXIOUS TO SEE
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THE CAMP AT BURU CLOSED. EXCEPT FOR A SMALL HANDFUL, THESE DETAINEES ARE "OUR PEOPLE" AN THEY SHOULD BE PERMITTED TO RESUME THEIR NORMAL ACTIVITIES. QUESTIONED FURTHER, HE REITERATED THAT, WHILE THERE WERE DIFFERING VIEWS WITHIN THE GOVERNMENT, HE PERSONALLY FAVORED ACCELERATING THE RELEASE SCHEDULE.

8. TURNING BRIEFLY TO FOREIGN AFFAIRS, JUSUF VOLUNTEERED THAT HE WAS PLEASED THAT INDONESIA'S RELATIONS WITH ITS NON-COMMUNIST NEIGHBORS HAVE BEEN STRENGTHENED. HE FULLY SUPPORTS ASEAN AND HOPES ITS ACTIVITIES WILL EXPAND FURTHER. HE FEELS IT IS PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT THAT THESE NATIONS KEEP CLOSE CONTACT AT LEAST UNTIL VIETNAM'S INTENTIONS ARE MORE CLEAR. HE IS BEARISH ON RELATIONS WITH CHINA, NOTING THAT RESUMPTION OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS IS NOT LIKELY THIS YEAR AND MAY NOT EVEN OCCUR IN 1979. HE DID, HOWEVER, BELIEVE THAT THERE MIGHT BE SOME CONTACT AT THE CONSULAR OR TRADE

LEVEL WITHIN THE NEXT YEAR.

9. COMMENT. THE PROGRAM JUSUF HAS IN MIND FOR THE MILITARY IS ENCOURAGING. IT WILL NOT, HOWEVER, BE SPEEDILY REALIZED. JUSUF IS BY NATURE A GRADUALIST, WHO SEEMS TO PREFER "SETTING EXAMPLES" TO ISSUING ORDERS. MORE IMPORTANT, HE HAS AT THIS MOMENT FEW PERSONAL ALLIES IN THE MILITARY STRUCTURE, FROM WHICH HE HAS BEEN LONG SEPARATED. WE CONSEQUENTLY EXPECT HIM TO MOVE SLOWLY BUT HOPEFULLY IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION. MASTERS

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